



THE WONDROUS PRUNE

ELLIE CLEMENTS

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE PACK

Dear reader,

This educational resource pack is based on Ellie Clements's magical middle-grade novel *The Wondrous Prune* and is an ideal learning resource for children in Key Stage 2. It includes a range of discussion questions and activities designed to keep children engaged and keen to explore the themes of this book. Key themes include 'Identity', 'Superpowers', 'Bullying' and 'Bereavement'.

We hope you enjoy reading this action-packed adventure and working your way through this pack.



ABOUT THE BOOK

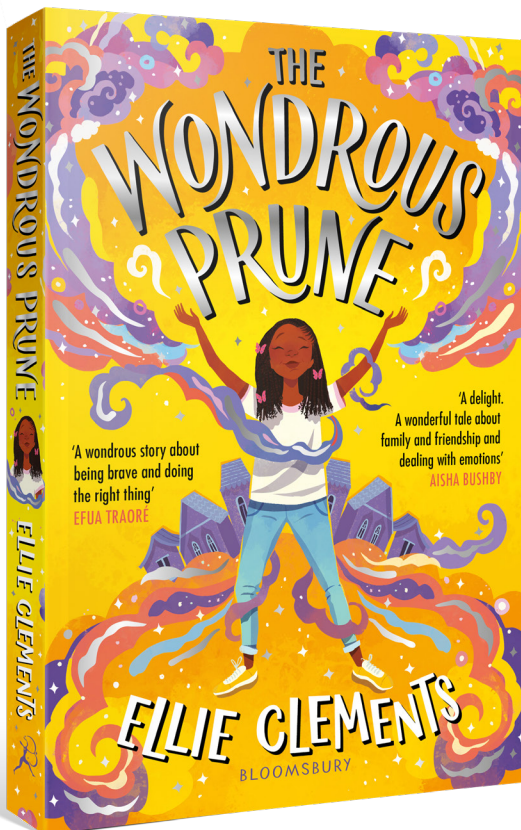
Prune's life has been completely ordinary. Until now ...

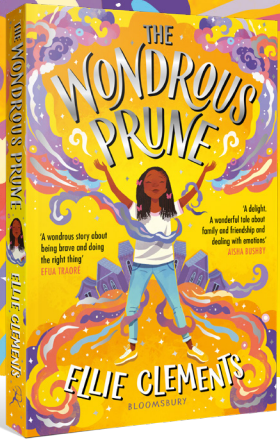
Uprooted by her single mum along with her troublesome older brother, eleven-year-old Prune Robinson is trying to settle in a new town. She figures she can't burden her hard-working mother with the fact she's being bullied. Or the fact that her drawings have started coming to life.

But with her brother soon in danger, Prune comes to realise that she can't hide her power forever; in fact, it might just be the one thing that brings her family back together and saves them all.

Planned as the start of a series about remarkable children from the same neighbourhood, *The Wondrous Prune* is poignant and surprising with wonderful wish fulfilment and accessible storytelling. Perfect for fans of Onjali Q. Raúf and Aisha Bushby.

Author Ellie Clements





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EXTRACTS AND NOTES

FOR KS2 TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

Suitable for: Age 9+

Explores themes of: ✓ Identity ✓ Superpowers ✓ Drawing ✓ Friendship ✓ Bullying ✓ Feelings
✓ Bereavement ✓ Moving House

Subject Checklist: ✓ Literacy ✓ Speaking and Listening ✓ Art, Design & Technology ✓ Drama ✓ PSHE

CONTENTS

- EXTRACT 1: AMAZING COLOURS (TAKEN FROM CHAPTER 1)

Objectives: Explore shades of colours and develop vocabulary; associate colours with feelings, memories and special people.

- EXTRACT 2: SUPERPOWERS (TAKEN FROM CHAPTER 12)

Objectives: Design a superhero; sketch objects you'd love to bring to life.

- EXTRACT 3: BEATING BULLIES (TAKEN FROM CHAPTER 31)

Objectives: Role play how to deal with a bully; illustrate a comic strip about making a new friend feel welcome.





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EXTRACT 1: AMAZING COLOURS (TAKEN FROM PAGES 1-3)

Has something completely astounding and spectacular but also totally surprising ever happened to you? My name is Prune Melinda Robinson. I'm eleven years old, and something like that has just happened to me. Something so extraordinary, so out of this world, I'm still amazed by it now! And I bet you will be too.

I'll never forget the day my life changed forever ...

It all started one Sunday. It was a perfectly ordinary day, well, so I thought: I ate my lunch as usual and went back upstairs to my room. But then, as I went and sat down on my bed, I was suddenly surrounded by the most amazing colours all bunched together like clouds.

Magenta, coral, teal, lavender, and so many shades of yellow – the colour of sweet lemonade, sunflowers and cheese on toast – plus reds, which were redder than the tastiest strawberries and my mama's favourite lipstick. Not only that, but amongst the colour clouds were the greenest greens and the brownest browns, the pinkest pinks and blues the colour of lagoons, and not forgetting my favourite colour of all, orange, which shone as beautiful as a sunrise.

I pinched myself and rubbed my eyes to make sure I wasn't dreaming because it was as if I'd been transported to the most magnificent and enchanting place, my bedroom feeling like a forest of endless bloom. Though, when I reached out to touch the colours, I couldn't feel a thing.

The colours were all so bright – brighter than the sky and even brighter than the moon when it gets all big and fat and sits outside your window like it wants to move in.

They were even brighter than my grandpa's smile, and no one had a smile quite as bright as Poppa B. Well, no one except Grandma Jean. Her smile was more brilliant than the ruby earrings she liked to wear, a gift from Poppa after they got married. She wore them to his funeral – her earrings and her smile the only things that were cheerful on that bleak November day.

Some people didn't get why my grandma looked so happy when they were crying and wailing, even those that didn't know my poppa but had only turned up because they'd heard Mama was making her famous potato salad for the wake. That's what my brother Jesse told me anyway.

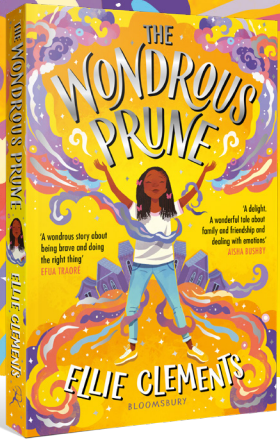
But Grandma Jean said she had already cried all the tears she had when Poppa first got sick, and when the cancer began to make him weaker and smaller until it finally took away that beautiful bright smile of his. So when he died, Grandma made sure smiling was all she did because even though she was sad, most of all she was just grateful that Poppa wasn't suffering any more.

And now Grandma's gone too. She died two and a half months ago and I've been missing her heaps. Sometimes I get so sad that it feels like I have a shattered plate where my heart should be that no amount of superglue can put back together.

There was so much already that had changed in my life before the bizarre events of that day, and trying to get used to a world without Grandma had been the biggest change of all. To add to all this, I was about to start a new school the next day, and we'd just moved to a new house. Well, it was actually the house that had belonged to Grandma and Poppa B in a town called Delmere. A place where people say nothing interesting ever happens.

That was until that Sunday, when *everything* changed.





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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Has something completely astounding and spectacular but also totally surprising ever happened to you? What was it? How did you react?
- What caused Prune's life to change forever?
- When the brightness of the colours are compared to the brightness of Poppa B's smile, what do we learn about how Prune felt about her grandparents?
- Why was Grandma Jean smiling at Poppa B's funeral?
- Prune is feeling sad because both her grandparents have died: '... it feels like I have a shattered plate where my heart should be that no amount of superglue can put back together.' What does this line mean? Have you ever felt like this?

ACTIVITY 1: OUR COLOURFUL WORLD

When Prune is surrounded by clouds of every colour imaginable, she can hardly believe her eyes.

- Using the template on the next page, create clouds of colours like Prune sees in her room. Use crayons, pencils, felt tips, pictures from magazines or images found on the internet to create the forest of blooms that Prune experiences.
- Try to think of more descriptive names for "greenest greens", "brownest browns" and "pinkest pinks".



MAGENTA

CORAL

TEAL

LAVENDER

LEMONADE

SUNFLOWERS

CHEESE ON TOAST

STRAWBERRIES

BROWNEST BROWNS

GREENEST GREENS

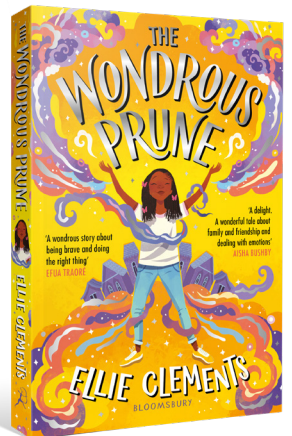
RED LIPSTICK

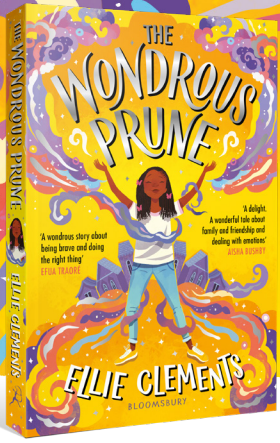
PINKEST PINKS

SUNRISE

LAGOON BLUE

FLOWER BLOOMS





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ACTIVITY 2: COLOURS HAVE MEANING

Later in the story, Prune uses powerful feelings to create her colourful clouds. Different colours are often used to represent certain feelings. They might also remind us of a particular memory or person.

- Think about the colours listed below. Which feelings do you associate them with? Do they make you think of a particular time in your life or a special person? Record your thoughts in the table below.

COLOUR	FEELING, MEMORY OR SPECIAL PERSON	COLOUR	FEELING, MEMORY OR SPECIAL PERSON
RED		PURPLE	
ORANGE		PINK	
YELLOW		WHITE	
GREEN		BROWN	
BLUE		BLACK	





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EXTRACT 2: SUPERPOWERS (TAKEN FROM PAGES 64-68)

I arrived at school towards the end of lunch. My class had already finished eating and were in the playground, so I had to eat my lunch by myself. And just as I was about to tuck into my apple crumble dessert, a girl in my class called Willow came up to me.

'Hi, Prune. I've been asked to give you this,' she said, handing me a folded piece of paper.

I opened the note and read it:

You're not wanted, Alienhead.

I of course knew immediately who it was from.

I got up and sped off to the toilets, tears spilling down my face as the colour clouds started to blossom around me – steel blues, mustard yellows, flamingo pinks, coffee browns, lime greens, ruby reds and thousands more. I felt so upset and would've done anything to have been back at my old school with Corinne and my other friends. Sitting in a cubicle, I took out my sketchbook and began to draw a picture of a hot-air balloon. I coloured the balloon blue and yellow with a green zigzag at the bottom.

I stared at the picture as I imagined being in a balloon just like it, one that would take me far away from the Vile-lets and Maple Lane School.

'I don't want to be here!' I cried. 'Take me away from this school – please take me away,' I said over and over as I wished for the balloon to be real.

All of a sudden the colours started to move, spinning and spinning until they'd narrowed into a funnel right above my sketchbook. Feeling alarmed, I dropped the sketchbook and squeezed my eyes shut, hoping the colours would go away.

What's happening?!

After a few seconds, I could hear a commotion coming from outside and quickly reopened my eyes. The colours were gone and from the sound of it, everyone was excited for some reason.

Wiping my tears with my sleeve, I stuffed my sketchbook back into my rucksack and headed out. Kids and teachers were all running towards the exit. I hurried out as well but then froze when I saw what was causing the excitement, my mouth practically hitting the ground.

In the middle of the playground was a hot-air balloon.

Not only that, but the balloon was blue and yellow with a green zigzag. It was identical to the balloon I'd drawn!

Nobody could believe their eyes, least of all me.

How could this even be possible?

My heart started to thud.

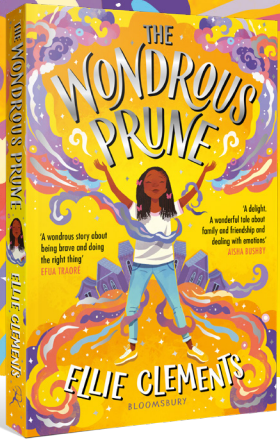
'There's nobody in the basket,' said Mrs Mahoney, the deputy head, who was trying to keep everyone away from it. (All the kids secretly call her Moody Mahoney because she's the grumpiest teacher at Maple Lane.)

'So how did it get here?' said another teacher, called Miss Parsons.

In amongst the crowd, I spotted Doug and made my way over.

'Do you know where that came from?' I asked him.





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'It just appeared out of nowhere, but it's so cool, don't you think?' said Doug.

'I guess so,' I muttered, feeling completely astonished.

'I wonder who it belongs to,' said a boy in our class called Oliver.

'Maybe someone famous,' said Doug.

Is it my balloon? I thought to myself, feeling slightly panicked. No, it can't be – can it?

I took out my sketchbook and flipped through the pages until I got to the picture of my hot-air balloon, but it was just a blank page.

I quietly gasped.

Where had my picture gone?

'Everyone inside, please. I'm sure there's a simple explanation for this,' said our head teacher, Mr Nelson, as he and other teachers started to usher us back inside.

For the rest of the day, the hot-air balloon was all anyone spoke about, but I was in too much shock to join in and I couldn't stop wondering if it was me who'd made the balloon appear. The colours had never turned into a funnel before, nor had any of my pictures just disappeared from my sketchbook. It was like the colours had somehow brought the hot-air balloon to life.

So was that it? Had the colours made my picture real? And if so, how?

I needed answers, and the only way I was going to get them was to draw another picture.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What caused Prune to run to the toilets? Has something similar ever happened to you or someone you know? How did you feel? What did you do about it?
- What does Prune do to help herself feel better? What makes you feel better when you are upset?
- Why did Prune choose to draw a hot-air balloon?
- In this chapter, Prune experiences her superpower for the first time. What is it?
- The author shares Prune's thoughts: 'Is it my balloon? No, it can't be – can it?' What do these thoughts tell us about how Prune is feeling?
- What does Prune need to do to find out if the colours actually brought the hot-air balloon to life?





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ACTIVITY 1: BE A SUPERHERO

In this extract, Prune is only just learning about her incredible ability to bring her drawings to life. Later in the story, she's able to harness this power to help her brother when he ends up in trouble.

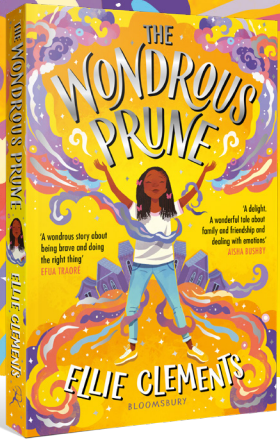
- In groups, discuss the characteristics of a superhero. Which qualities make them a hero? What powers might they have? When or why would they use their powers? Do they always use their powers for good?
- Think about what your superpower would be if you had one. How would you use it to help others? What would be your superhero name?
- Design your own superhero (it could be you) then fill in the boxes on the right with details about the superhero's powers.

SUPERHERO NAME:

SUPERPOWERS:

HELPING OTHERS:





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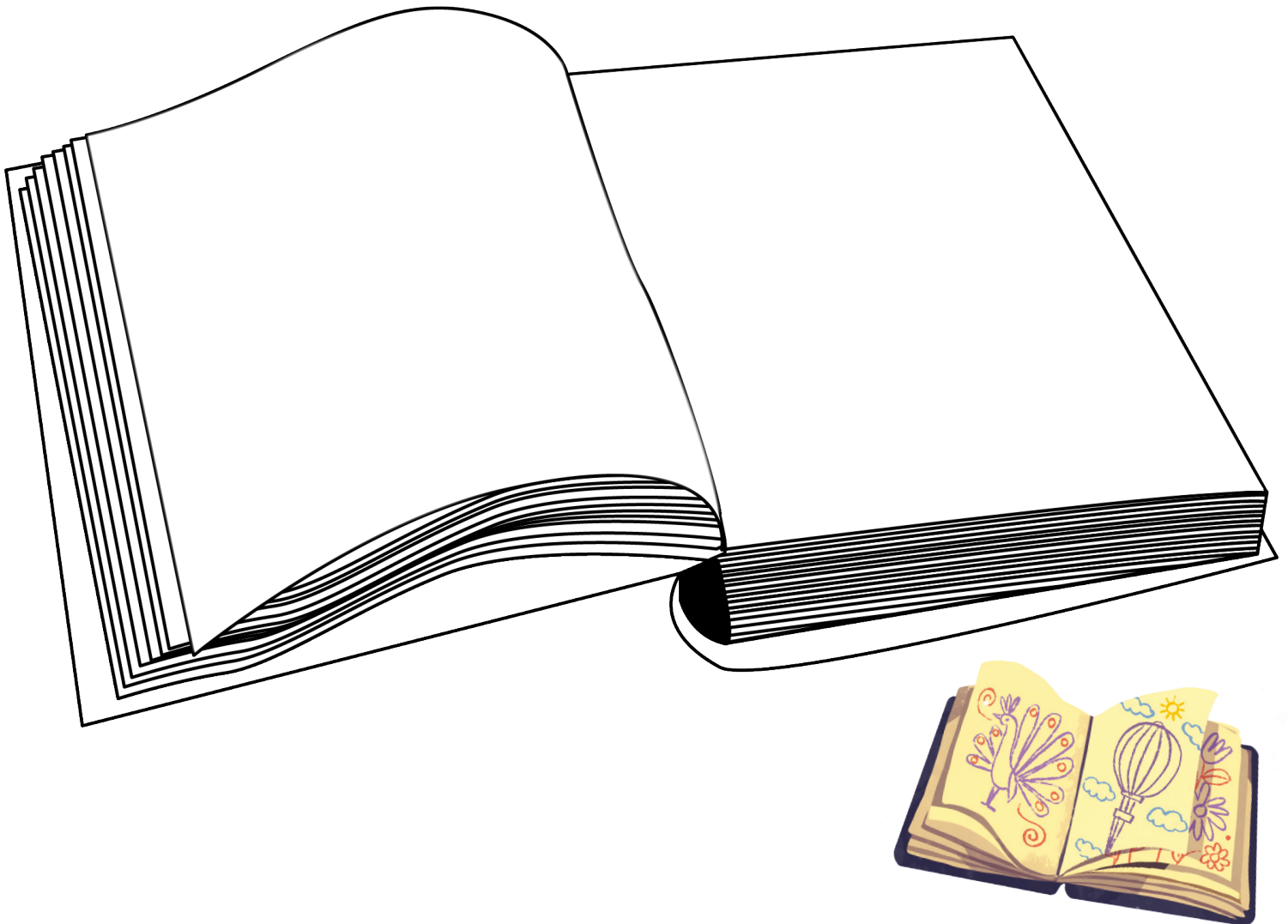
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ACTIVITY 2: BRINGING DRAWINGS TO LIFE

Prune quickly learns that some things are safe and fun to draw while others (like a tiger) are not such a good idea.

- Imagine you have the ability to bring drawings to life. What would you draw? How would you use your ability? Would you draw things for yourself or others? Which drawings could cause a lot of trouble?
- Use the sketchbook below to draw your objects. Then, when you're finished, share your drawings with a partner and explain why you chose them.





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EXTRACT 3: BEATING BULLIES (TAKEN FROM PAGES 178-180)

The following day I was chatting to Doug about the kinds of superpower we thought would be cool to have, like being able to shrink or become huge like Ant-Man or move as fast as the Flash or have supersonic hearing or the ability to make ourselves invisible. Doug admitted he wished he could be invisible whenever the Vile-lets were around. His face drooped sadly as he said this – then, to make matters worse, minutes later we were ambushed by them.

'Dorky Doug, Dorky Doug. He's the dorkiest Doug there is,' their voices sang, as they followed us around the playground. It made me so cross they were upsetting Doug as he walked with his head down.

Unable to keep my fury in, I spun round to face them.

'Why can't you just leave him alone?' I spat, which not only surprised Doug, whose eyes widened as he raised his head, but surprised me too. If you'd have told me that morning what I was going to do, I wouldn't have believed it. But I just couldn't watch them being unkind to Doug – the only person who'd always been there for me at Maple Lane.

'Hey, Dorky, is Prune your girlfriend?' Violet crowed as his cheeks went bright red.

'For your information, we're FRIENDS!' I roared. *'So why don't you just buzz off, you vile idiots!'* An assortment of colours exploded around me – orange, mauve, cyan, jade, indigo, yellow and teal, amongst others.

As Doug and I strode off, the Vile-lets started to go *'wooooooh'* sarcastically, but for a few minutes, I felt pleased that I hadn't cowered and was proud that I'd been able to stick up for Doug. But very quickly I began to have a feeling that I'd only made things worse for myself.

'That was so cool what you said to them,' said Doug, his cheeks still red as we sat down on a bench. *'You're the first person who's ever stuck up for me like that. Not even Theo has, but I think he's scared they'll pick on him too.'*

'Doug, I think we have to tell Mrs Downing,' I said. *'They're bullies, pure and simple, and if we don't say anything, they won't stop.'*

'I know,' Doug replied quietly. *'I've wanted to tell her for ages. But I guess I've just felt too afraid.'*

'Well, you won't have to be any more once I've spoken to Mrs Downing,' I said.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Look at the first paragraph. Why do Prune and Doug call the group of girls the "Vile-lets"? How have these girls been making Doug feel? How do you know?
- Why are Prune and Doug so surprised by how Prune reacts to the Vile-lets teasing Doug? Why do you think she suddenly reacts this way?
- How does the author show Prune is experiencing very strong feelings?
- Prune has mixed feelings about how she handled the situation. Why is this?
- Why do you think other people don't stand up to the Vile-lets?





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ACTIVITY 1: DEALING WITH BULLIES

Prune stands up for Doug when the Vile-lets (a group of unkind girls) start picking on him again. It's happened too many times and Prune has had enough. She decides to do something about it.

- Think about times when you have seen people either being bullied or bullying someone else. Perhaps it has happened to you.
- Get into groups of four. Talk with your group about how bullying makes someone feel and what you can do if someone is being bullied. Perhaps you could consider the following strategies:
 - Be a friend to the person being treated unkindly
 - Interrupt the bullying and take the victim away from the situation
 - Speak up and tell the bully to stop
 - Get help from an adult
- Share your strategies and make a list to keep in your classroom – this can help you deal with bullies together.

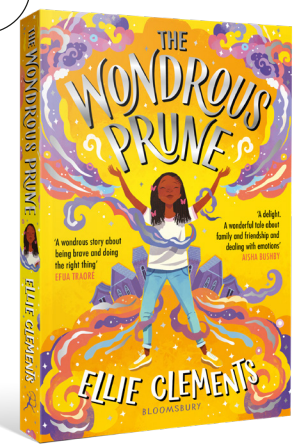
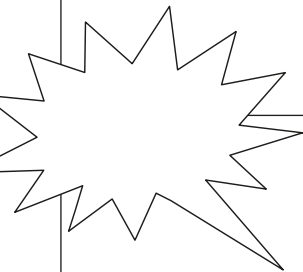
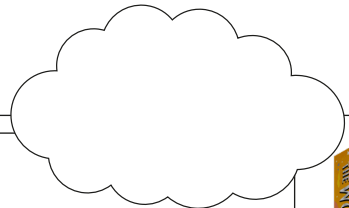
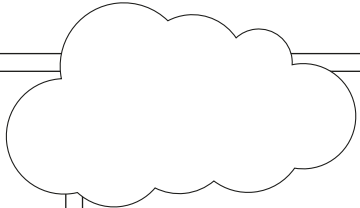
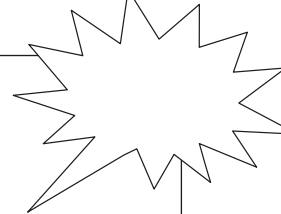
ACTIVITY 2: BEING A FRIEND

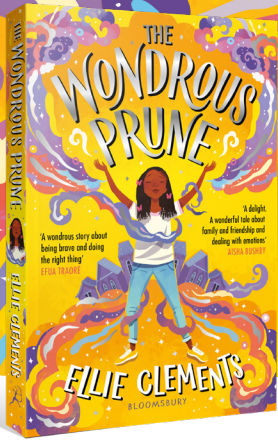
Both Prune and Jesse have a tough time when they move to Delmere. They try to make friends but end up having to deal with bullies who make their lives so difficult.

- Imagine you meet Prune or Jesse when they first arrive at their new school. How could you be a good friend? Talk with your group about the qualities of a good friend and what you can do to make a new student feel welcome.
- Using the template, create a page from a graphic novel that shows two new friends meeting for the first time. Consider everyone's feelings and the positive actions you've discussed.



A large graphic organizer template consisting of several rectangular boxes connected by lines. The layout includes a top row with two boxes, a middle row with a large central box, and a bottom row with two boxes. A cloud shape is positioned above the middle box, and another cloud shape is positioned below the right box. Two starburst shapes are placed on the left side of the template, one in the top-left area and one in the middle-left area.



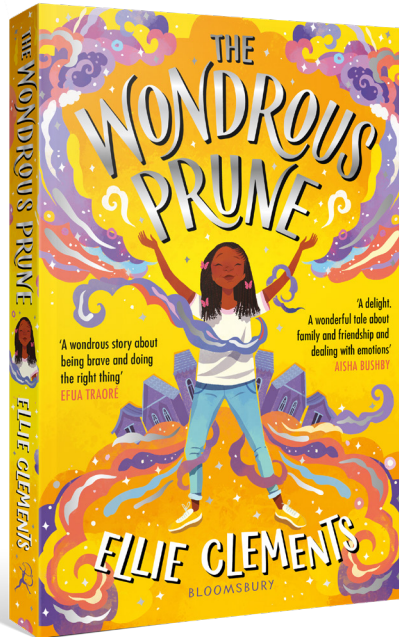


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You've now reached the end of this resource pack for *The Wondrous Prune*



We hope these notes have proved to be a fun and insightful introduction to the themes and ideas found within this book.

We would love to see examples of any work created as a result of this pack, so please do email them over to us on:

childrensmarketing@bloomsbury.com

or share on Twitter tagging us at

[@KidsBloomsbury](https://twitter.com/KidsBloomsbury) [@elliecwrites](https://twitter.com/elliecwrites)

